many countries, like France 75.8% Lithuania 77.2% Korea 41.4% Belgium 55.2% etc. based on IAFA study.

Delegation of SSI Enterpreneurs to USA

*310. SHRI VAYALAR RAVI: Will the Minister of SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES AND AGRO AND RURAL INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether she lead a delegation of SSI entrepreneurs to USA;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any discussion was held with the Government of USA and other concerned institutions; and

(d) whether any MOU was signed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) IN THE MINISTRY OF SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES AND AGRO AND RURAL INDUSTRIES (SHRIMATI VASUNDHRA RAJE):

(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) MOS (SSI & ARI) led an official-cum-business delegation of SMEs to USA from 13th February to 18th February, 2000. She was accompanied by two Officers and a nineteen member team from the C.I.I.

(c) Discussion were held with the US Small Business Adminstrator. Seminars on India jointly organized by USIBC and CH on business opportunities in India were also attended.

(d) No, Sir.

Blue Book for LPG Consumers

†*311. SHRI SURYABHAN PATIL VAHADANE: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the issuance of Blue Book and its acceptance by the consumers is mandatory at the time of giving new LPG connection;

(b) whether in transfer cases, the gas agencies can refuse connections to the consumers in the absence of Blue Book inspite of submitting original Transfer Voucher issued by the previous agency;

(c) whether Government are aware of the fact that Jamshedpur Gas Service,

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

Jamshedpur (Bihar) is not giving connections to the consumers in the absence of Blue Book and demanding extra money from them; and

(d) what action Government propose to take against the said agency?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI RAM NAIK): (a) Blue Books are issued by the Distributors to the LPG customers at the time of release of new LPG connection.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) and (d) No such complaint has been received by Indian Oil Corporation against the Jamshedpur Gas Service.

ESI hospital in Karnataka

*312. SHRI K. C. KONDAIAH: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have taken up upgradation of ESI hospital, Davangere in Karnataka, into a 75 bedded hospital;

(b) if so, the amount proposed to be spent for the upgradation of the above hospital during 1999-2000; and

(c) if so, the amount, if any, released by Government, so far?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (DR. SATYA NARAYAN JATIYA): (a) to (c) The State Government of Karnataka have sent a proposal for upgradation of the ESI hospital at Davangere from 50-bedded hospital to 75 bedded hospital, involing an expenditure of Rs. 86.68 lakh. This proposal has not yet been accepted by the ESI Corporation because of decline in the number of insured persons and decline in the bed occupancy in this hospital.The State Government has been asked to give detailed justification for upgradation of this hospital. However, in order to upgrade medical facilities in the said hospital, the ESI Corporation has already sanctioned, in January 1999 and January 2000, an amount of Rs. 14.98 lakh for enabling the State Government to purchase equipments of ultra-sonography, dental unit cardie monitor, pulse oximeter etc.